

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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SUBJ: TORRINGTON INDUSTRIES

REF: (A) LISBON 3770; (B) LISBON 3833

1. SEVERAL MEETINGS HAVE TAKEN PLACE DURING LAST TWO DAYS TO DISCUSS APPARENT WORSENING SITUATION OF TORRINGTON CASE.

2. ON JULY 8, TORRINGTON U.S. LAWYER DISCUSSED LABMIN PROPOSAL OF JULY 3 (REFTEL A) WITH LABMIN MEDIATOR ROSA. ASHMEAD INTERPRETS ROSA'S REMARKS TO LAWYER RE SUGGESTED INQUIRY INTO RETURN OF TORRINGTON MANAGERS TO FACTORY AS MEANING THAT PROPOSAL IS NON-NEGOTIABLE, NOTWITHSTANDING REMARKS OF AMARAL (REFTEL B).

3. TORRINGTON OFFICIALS MET UNTIL 3:00 A.M. JULY 9 WITH THREE TORRINGTON EMPLOYEES WHO CONTINUE WORKING AT PLANT. ACCORDING ASHMEAD, THESE EMPLOYEES REPORT THAT GENERAL WORKERS MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR JULY 9. APPARENTLY WORKERS COMMITTEE WILL PRESENT FOR APPROVAL A PROPOSAL OUTLINING EXPENDITURE OF TWO MILLION ESCUDOS RECEIVED FROM LABOR MINISTER AND RECOMMENDING NEW MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATION OF FIRM. PROPOSAL
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PROVIDES THAT EACH WORKER WOULD GET 2000 ESCUDOS (\$80) WHILE

REST OF FUNDS (APPROXIMATELY 1.2 MILLION ESCUDOS OR \$480,000) WOULD BE USED TO PAY FOR SUPPLIES BOUGHT DOMESTICALLY AND FOR MATERIALS IN CUSTOMS CONSIGNED TO TORRINGTON PORTUGUESA. IN ADDITION, PROPOSAL NAMES JINDRICH (HEAD OF WORKERS COMMITTEE) AS TORRINGTON MANAGING DIRECTOR AND CABRITA (THE FIRED WORKER) AS ASSISTANT MANAGING DIRECTOR.

4. ECONOMIC COUNSELOR FORMALLY REQUESTED ON JULY 9 THAT DR. JOAO PEQUITO, DIRECTOR-GENERAL FOR ECONOMIC AFFAIRS OF FOREIGN MINISTRY, BRING TO ATTENTION OF FOREIGN MINISTER EMBASSY'S CONCERN OVER TORRINGTON CASE. PEQUITO, WHO HAD HAD SOME PREVIOUS KNOWLEDGE OF CASE, AGREED TO BRING MATTER TO ATTENTION OF MINISTER. HE ASKED, AND EMBASSY AGREED TO PROVIDE BY JULY 10, AIDE MEMOIRE SETTING FORTH FACTS.

5. IN ATTEMPT ADVANCE REPORTED TORRINGTON MEETING WITH INDUSTRIES MINISTER CRAVINHO, EMBASSY WAS INFORMED BY CRAVINHO'S APPOINTMENTS SECRETARY THAT MEETING HAD ACTUALLY BEEN SCHEDULED WITH THIRD LEVEL OFFICIAL (UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE), NOT WITH MINISTER. TORRINGTON OFFICIALS ATTEMPTING CONFIRM THIS REPORT, BUT THEY TEND TO BELIEVE EMBASSY INFORMATION ACCURATE AND ARE EXTREMELY UPSET AT BEING SHUNTED TO LOW LEVEL OFFICIAL, ESPECIALLY SINCE THEY HAD REQUESTED APPOINTMENT WITH MINISTER AND INFORMED HIM SEVERAL WEEKS AGO (BY LETTER) OF GRAVITY OF SITUATION.

6. GIVEN ABOVE DEVELOPMENTS, ASHMEAD PLANS CALL TORRINGTON PRESIDENT O'CONNEL EARLY AFTERNOON LISBON TIME (EARLY MORNING EST) JULY 9. HE WILL RECOMMEND THAT TORRINGTON ASK DEPARTMENT TO MAKE STRONG OFFICIAL PROTEST TO GOP ASAP. ASHMEAD SEES NO NEED TO AWAIT FURTHER EVETNTS.

7. SEPTTEL CONTAINS EMBASSY RECOMMENDATION THAT HIGH-LEVEL DEMARCHE BE MADE ASAP, IN BOTH LISBON AND WASHINGTON, AS WELL AS SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS.
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